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SUBJECT: SAO PAULO ENVIRONMENTAL POLICE MAKING INROADS AGAINST  
ILLCIT LOGGING

¶1. (SBU) SUMMARY: Creative, pro-active mechanisms and partnerships are enabling the Sao Paulo Environmental Police (SPEP) to combat illegal logging activities. Over 8,000 tons of illegally cut wood, most from outside the state, has been apprehended by the SPEP within the last 2 years. While SPEP continues to face resource and technical constraints, documentation fraud, and difficulty in pursuing prosecutions, partnerships with non-profit organizations are helping to train SPEP officers and raise the level of awareness against illicit logging. As a result of the achievements so far, other Brazilian states are looking at Sao Paulo's efforts as a potential model. END SUMMARY.

#### Background

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¶2. (U) SPEP - founded in 1945 - is the largest environmental police force in Brazil. With a staff of over 2,200, SPEP enforces state and federal environmental laws related to pollution, fishing, wild life protection and water usage. The force is dispersed along interstate roads, protected areas and public parks and works in partnership with federal and other states' environmental programs. Deputy State Secretary of Environment, Pedro Ubiratan Azevedo, told us that SPEP is currently engaged in 21 such projects, including the Document of Forest Origin (DOF) program (see para 4).

#### Impeding Illegal Logging

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¶3. (U) Though not a source of Amazon-produced lumber, Sao Paulo State consumes around 25 per cent of all the wood originating from the Amazon region, according to Carlos Beduschi, DOF program coordinator. Illegal logging falls within the jurisdiction of SPEP as contraband lumber enters Sao Paulo State via the interstate highways connecting the Amazon region to the Port of Santos, 40 miles south of Sao Paulo. SPEP focuses their interdiction efforts on intercepting shipments enroute to the port and inspecting the 6,000 warehouses and lumber yards located throughout Sao Paulo

State.

On the road with macroscopic cameras

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14. (SBU) The DOF program requires that all transported wood materials have accompanying documentation declaring sustainability and legal origin. Issued via the internet from the federal environmental agency, IBAMA, it has been enforced since 2006 and requires the cooperation between SPEP, NGOs and independent experts. According to SPEP Captain Marcos Diniz, training remains a key to the success of the program. He explained that the DOF system works due to the electronic system of "Authorization to Transport Forestry Products" (ATPF in Portuguese), which it replaced in 2007. Squadrons positioned at eight roadside points throughout the state are equipped with a basic knowledge of the most commonly felled timber species as well as a hand held magnifying lens (10x). Upon inspection of the carriage, volume and the DOF, the police may take several samples of the lumber along with all paper work to one of five stations equipped with a laptop and macroscopic camera system to transmit the sample images to the Instituto Florestal (IF), based in Sao Paulo. A technician at IF then inspects and identifies all submitted samples immediately,

confirming the results online for the officer who apprehended the shipment or stock. Since 2008, the program has intercepted over 8,000 tons of illegal lumber.

Challenges Remain

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15. (SBU) Despite the SPEP's budding success in combating illicit logging traffic, obstacles ranging from technical to financial to legal persist. Diniz stated that the computerized inspection system is working well, but an additional 20 laptop stations are needed for use on the road. Likewise, the considerable cost of the necessary equipment: laptops, cameras, macroscopic lenses, and a sophisticated GPS system to track SPEP officers in the field, strains SPEP's limited budget. Likewise, Diniz noted that all of SPEP's technology depends upon a reliable, high speed internet connection to transmit information and determine the legitimacy of shipments en route to the port. Beyond technology, SPEP officers must develop expertise on forestry species. Diniz and Beduschi highlighted the continuing need for training the police - with the help of the "Friends of the Amazon" program funded by the Center of Sustainable Studies of the Getulio Vargas Foundation (FGV) in Sao Paulo.

16. (U) According to Sao Paulo State Deputy Environment Secretary Ubiratan, challenges in detecting fraud in the DOF Program, especially document falsification, continue to grow. For example, Beduschi cited the discrepancy of the quantity of lumber registered within the system as evidence of the extent of document fraud. At present, 9 million cubic meters of licensed lumber is authorized within the DOF and ATPF systems, but over 16 million cubic meters of lumber actually flow through the market of Sao Paulo. Many factors account for this difference: misidentification of the species, mixing of stock, improper allocation of scrap material and human error. However, many shippers intentionally attempt to obfuscate the illegal material within a larger shipment of more commonly processed wood.

17. (U) Law enforcement and government offices seek to raise awareness and cooperation among all segments of the government and society, including those beyond the borders of Sao Paulo. Several mentioned the need to work more closely with industry in Sao Paulo as well as the possibility of offering cross-border training and sponsoring conferences to raise awareness of illegal logging and transport. Ultimately, all would like to see the Brazilian consumer drive the demand for legal product all the way back to the source. Azevedo admitted that the consumer would have to pay more for legal, sustainable forest products.

#### Cooperative Law Enforcement

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18. (SBU) Beyond interdicting illegal lumber shipments, prosecuting cases remains a major challenge. In recent discussions with U.S. Lacey Act expert and Department of Justice Prosecutor Richard Udell, Sao Paulo Public Ministry Chief Prosecutors for environmental crimes Jose Lutti and Luis Proen???a said Brazilian authorities generally focus on prosecuting large-scale felonies in the area of environmental policy, administration and coordination. They posited that if a law like the Lacey Act was implemented in the state of Sao Paulo, more small-scale trafficking cases could be

pursued as misdemeanors. Udell identified independent audits, compliance plans and a probationary system as necessary elements to enhance environmental crime enforcement in the state of Sao Paulo. The goal is to put pressure on all players in the market, per Udell, "the effect thus far has to encourage large companies like Home Depot to implement due diligence policies to make sure that they are trading in legal wood products."

#### Comment: SPEP as a Model

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19. (SBU) Using modern technology and flexible tactics to deploy mobile units around Sao Paulo, the SPEP is achieving results in interdicting illicit logging shipments. With Sao Paulo State serving as a critical shipment crossroads for the logging industry, the SPEP is in a unique position to have a national impact on illegal logging. Moreover, several regions within the Amazon, as well as neighboring Minas Gerais State are expressing interest in the SPEP/DOF program. Although challenges remain to sustain and expand the DOF program, the achievements so far and continued cooperation with successful NGO forestry conservation programs such as Cadmadeira and Amigos da Amazonia (septel) are helping Brazil better protect its forestry resources and may offer opportunities to combat illegal lumber trafficking beyond the borders of Brazil. White